# Crosslinguistic tendencies in the intralinguistic variations of motion descriptions: An experimental study of manner, path, and deixis

Yo Matsumoto[1], Kimi Akita[2], Fabiana Andreani[3], Kiyoko Eguchi[2], Noriko Imazato[4], Kazuhiko Kawachi[5], Ikuko Matsuse[6], Takahiro Morita[7], Naonori Nagaya[8], Kiyoko Takahashi[9], Ryosuke Takahashi[10], & Yuko Yoshinari[11]

[1]*Kobe University,* [2]*Osaka University,* [3]*University of Naples "L'Orientale",* [4]*Kobe Kosen,* [5]*National Defense Academy of Japan,* [6]*Keio University,* [7]*Toyo University,* [8]*Tokyo University of Foreign Studies,* [9]*Kanda University of International Studies,* [10]*Sophia University, &* [11]*Gifu University*

Descriptions of motion events in language often manifest intralinguistic variations, exhibiting different expression patterns for different types of motion events (Talmy 1991, Croft et al. 2010). In this crosslinguistic experimental study, we report the results of our video-based production study of motion event description, conducted in 17 languages (English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Mongolian, Japanese, Newar, Chinese, Thai, Tagalog, Yup'ik, Kupsapiny, Sidaama, Kiswahili, and Japanese Sign Language (JSL)). We will discuss some common tendencies in intralinguistic variations observed in these languages. The experiment asked informants to verbally describe various motion scenes. Unlike most of the similar experiments that looked at only manner and path, this experiment looked at scenes that differ in manner, path and deixis. Results of 27 clips involving three different manners (Walking, Running, Skipping), three different paths (To-path, Into-path, Up-path), and three different deictic directions (Toward the speaker, Away from the speaker, Neutral) are examined.

The results suggest that some languages including English, German, Hungarian, Tagalog, and Kupsapiny tend to show Satellite-framed language pattern (Talmy 1991) or Nonhead-coding of Path (Matsumoto 2003), while other languages including French and Italian tend to show Verb-framed language pattern or Head-coding of Path. Newar and Japanese are different in that they tend to code deixis in the main verb (=head), allowing Path and Manner to be expressed in nonhead elements. Thai and JSL generally encode motion in serial verb constructions consisting of manner, path and deictic verbs (though in JSL path and deixis are inseparable).

The most interesting result is that most languages other than English, Thai, and JSL exhibit a certain degree of mixed patterns depending on particular manner/path/deixis involved, and there are commonalities in the patterns of variations that hold across the boundary of typological types. The common tendencies in variation include the following: 1) Prominent manners (Running and Skipping) tend to be coded more often than unmarked manner of walking, observed in languages like German, Hungarian, Kupsapiny, Tagalog, French and Italian. 2) A prominent deictic direction (i.e.,Toward the speaker=venitive) is coded more frequently than the other deictic directions, often in the main verb position, a tendency found in German, Hungarian, Tagalog, French and Italian. 3) Up-path tends to be coded in the head verb more often than Into-path and especially To-path, a phenomenon found in Kupsapiny, French, Italian, Newar, and Kiswahili. The third tendency (concerning path) above allows mixed patterns for languages like Italian, which use the main verb (head) coding of Up-path, but which tend to code Into- and To-paths in terms of prepositions. The use of the main verb for Up-path is especially frequent when the manner involved is walking and the deictic direction involved is other than venitive.

These observations show that intralinguistic variations in motion descriptions are partially systematic and predictable. In addition, these observations have an important implication for the typology of motion event descriptions: the choice of the main verb for coding path is partially dependent on the interaction of particular manner/path/deixis categories involved. The most favorable situation for coding path in the main verb is an Up-path walking motion with neutral deictic direction. Languages differ how far from this core case the use of path verbs is extended, capturing the degree of prototypicality of Verb-framed languages or languages exhibiting the head coding of Path.

## References

Talmy, Leonard. 1991. Path to realization. *BLS 17*, pp. 480-519.

Matsumoto, Yo. 2003. Typologies of lexicalization patterns and event integration: Clarifications and reformulations. In Shuji Chiba et al. eds., *Empirical and Theoretical Investigations into Language*, pp. 403-418. Tokyo: Kaitakusha. Reprinted in Adele Goldberg, ed., *Cognitive Linguistics* (Critical Concepts in Linguistics), Vol. III, 2011, pp. 422-439. London & New York: Routledge.